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Item 5

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Date: January 11, 2013

To: TEUC

From: Nicole Losch, DPW
Jen Francis, DPR

Subject: Recommendation for 2103 Transportation Alternatives Grant Candidate: Waterfront
Bike Path Section 3

Memo

In November 2012, the Vermont Agency of Transportation announced the 2013 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program. This Program was established in new federal transportation legislation – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) – which was signed into law on July 6, 2012. The Program in part replaces the former Transportation Enhancements Program and provides funding for construction, planning and design of:

- on-road and off-road trail facilities;
- infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers;
- conversion and use of abandoned rail corridors for trails;
- construction of turnouts and viewing areas;
- community improvement activities to inventory, control, or remove outdoor advertising; historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities; vegetation management in transportation rights-of-way, archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this program;
- any environmental mitigation activity to address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or highway runoff; or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity amount terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

Eligible projects may receive up to \$300,000 in Federal funds and require a 20% local match (10% cash). Applications are due January 18, 2013.

An interdepartmental review committee reviewed several candidates for consideration in the 2013 TA Program. The following projects were considered but were not selected as the preferred candidate.

1. Sherman Street Stairs – this project would design and/or construct a pedestrian path at the western-most end of Sherman Street (at the Battery Park/Police Station parking lot) and provide pedestrian access to the waterfront via Depot Street. Scoping of this project was completed in the 2009

Waterfront North Access Scoping Study. Construction alone was estimated to be \$411,000 to \$818,000. Design alone is not an eligible project, so this was not a realistic candidate for the TA program.

2. City Hall Park – this project would design and construct a portion of the 2012 Imagine City Hall Park Plan. However, the plan is not developed for phasing at the level of funding available through the TA program.

The project selected as the grant candidate for the 2013 TA program is rehabilitation and realignment of Section 3 (Blodgett building to the Barge Canal Beach) of the waterfront bike path. The waterfront path is managed by the Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR). Of all the sections identified for implementation in the 2012 Burlington Bike Path Feasibility Study, this section was selected because:

- the scope of improvements are clearly defined in the Feasibility Study
- the entire section can be designed and constructed using the available funds
- this section is near proposed TIF district Bike Path improvements that have a similar timeframe
- improvements to this section will greatly improve safety, visibility and connectivity, all scoring criteria for the TA program.

The TA program does require a 20% match. The DPR have identified up to \$75,000 for the local match from two dedicated tax sources: the Penny for Parks Program and the Bike Path Improvements & Maintenance Program. Should the grant be awarded, these funds will be committed in conjunction with the FY14 budget and further supported by up to \$2,570,000 in TIF funding dedicated to the rehabilitation of the Bike Path in complimentary areas (Sections 5-10). The Penny for Parks Program raises approximately \$350,000 and supports the repair, renovation, replacement, or expansion of existing park facilities as well as the construction of new facilities in existing parks. The Bike Path Improvements & Maintenance Program raises approximately \$180,000 annually that may be used for design, permitting and construction of improvement and maintenance needs for Burlington's Bike Path network, connector trails and corridors.

In addition to providing more than half of the local match, the Improvements & Maintenance Fund will also support the maintenance of Section 3 once the rehabilitation of this section is complete. The ongoing maintenance of the Bike Path is managed by the City's Department of Parks and Recreation.

If awarded, the project and the grant administration will be managed by the Department of Public Works, with design oversight from the DPR.

Grant awards are expected to be announced in March 2013. Through this program, construction would occur in 2015 at the earliest.

Staff recommends that the city apply for rehabilitation and realignment of the waterfront bike path Section 3 through the 2013 Transportation Alternatives Program.
